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US Senate adopts decision on East Timor

US Senate: 'Solve E Timor conflict!'

On 29 July 1991, the US Senate adopted a 'sense of the Congress' decision calling on the US Administration to address "the underlying causes of the conflict in East Timor". The decision which has been adopted as Amendment 878 of the Foreign Appropriations Bill, was proposed by Democrat Senator Claiborne Pell (Dem. Rhode Island), chair of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and supported by senators from both parties: Senator Malcolm Wallop (Rep. Wyoming), Senator John Kerry (Dem. Massachusetts), Senator Paul Simon (Dem. Illinois), Senator Carl Levin (Dem. Michegan), Senator Daniel Moynihan (Dem. New York), Senator Dave Durenberger (Rep. Minnesota) and Senator Jesse Helms (Rep. N. Carolina).

The amendment provides that the following shall be incorporated into the Bill:

a. FINDINGS – The Congress finds that,

(1) at least 100,000 individuals out of a population of nearly 700,000 perished in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor between 1975 and 1980, as a result of war–related killings, famine and disease following the invasion of that territory by Indonesia;

(2) Amnesty International and other international human rights organisations continue to report evidence in East Timor of human rights violations, including torture, arbitrary arrest, and repression of freedom of expression;

(3) serious medical, nutritional and humanitarian problems persist in East Timor;

(4) a state of conflict continues to exist in East Timor; and

(5) the governments of Portugal and Indonesia have conducted discussions since 1982 under the auspices of the United Nations to find an internationally acceptable solution to the East Timor conflict.

b. STATEMENT OF POLICY – It is the sense of the Congress that,

(1) the President should urge the Government of Indonesia to take acion to end all forms of human rights violations in East Timor and to permit full freedom of expression in East Timor;

(2) the President should encourage the Government of Indonesia to facilitate the work of international human rights organisations and other groups seeking to monitor human rights conditions in East Timor and to cooperate with international humanitarian relief and development organisations seeking to work in East Timor; and

(3) that the administration should work with the United Nations and the governments of Indonesia, Portugal, and other involved parties to develop policies to address the underlying causes of the conflict in East Timor.